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ART. X.—THE ULTRAMONTANE MOVEMENT IN CANADA.

CANADA is accorded at Rome that distinction in North America which among European nations is expressed by the envied designation, "the eldest son of the Church." And while Spain has sometimes, as at the Council of Trent, disputed with France the practical pre-eminence in Europe, Canada stands in this part of the American continent without a rival. The city of Quebec is awarded the honor of being the proud mother of sixty dioceses.* The Province of Lower Canada (now Quebec), which the rising tide of ultramontanism bore along with it, is now among the most demonstrative in its obedience to Rome.

More than to any other individual the ultramontane movement owed its propulsion to Mgr. Ignace Bourget, who was Bishop of Montreal for a period of thirty-six years, and whose resignation took place in 1876. Contrary to the usual custom of Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, he admitted the new departure, and publicly rejoiced in the establishment of a "New School." This New School "approves everything the Pope approves, and condemns everything that the Pope condemns; consequently it rejects liberalism, philosophy, Cæsarism, rationalism, indifference."† It is the glory of this school to follow in every particular the teaching of Rome, and to prove its sincerity by its acts. As Pontifical Zouaves, between five and six hundred of them took up arms and flew to the defence of the Holy See, when the civil power of the papacy was in the agony of dissolution; and in the hour of defeat they only laid down their swords to take up the pen to defend the cause they had espoused.‡ In each capacity they served, in turn, with all the ardor and devotion of youth. There were among them descendants of the old *noblesse* and members of other *bonnes familles* who could appear to advantage in the drawing-room, and

* Bull of Pope Pius IX., May 15, 1876.

† Circulaire of Bishop Bourget, March 19, 1872.

‡ "Nous sommes heureux de compter plusieurs de nos Zouaves, qui consacrent leur plumes à la défense du St. Siège, ne pouvant faire servir leurs épées à la garde de la Ville Sainte." — *Ib.*

acquit themselves without discredit in the literary circle, provided it was sufficiently narrow. These were the secondary leaders of the New School, the followers being made up of such materials as happened to come to hand. These secondary leaders were expected to become faithful echoes of ultramontane opinions in the legislature and the judicial tribunal, at the bar, in the lecture-room, in houses of education. As journalists, they were to make implacable war on *mauvais principes*, all principles being bad which were not in favor at Rome. As judges, whenever any of them rose to that dignity, they were to respect the claims of the church. It was an essential qualification that they should unlearn Pothier and all the Gallican authors from whom they had imbibed the principles of jurisprudence, which it would now be their duty as judges to apply.

The Canadian Zouaves, whether they fight with sword or pen, are no mere mercenaries. Their heart is in the work. But it is the will of their commanders that they should take the enemy at a disadvantage. He is only allowed to meet them with tied hands and paralyzed tongue. There is and can be no free discussion where only one side is allowed freedom of expression. Authority, interdict, anathema, are the thunders which aid the battalion of Zouaves, and when their voice is heard opposition is soon silenced. However bold the determination, however great the courage of the champions of free discussion, the end is certain. The interdicted journal is stifled in a chilling atmosphere of terror.

The Zouave in citizen's clothes, with a pen in his hand, is scarcely less an object of episcopal and papal admiration than when he takes the field in open violation of international right. Cheered on by Pope and prelate,* *hè* gives no quarter, though himself exposed to no danger. "The Holy Father," says Bishop Bourget, "desires that the bishops should protect and defend the journalists and other Catholic (ultramontane) writers." He receives the words of the Pope as an order, and instructs the priests to "excite the ardor of these writers." The pontiff, he says, has assigned to these writers "the defence of the rights of the Holy See, the execution of its decrees in all their force, the combating of opinions and sentiments contrary to the teaching and authority of the Holy See, the pursuit of errors even to the most obscure retreats."

* Encyclical *Inter Multiplices* to the clergy of France, pressed into the service of Bishop Bourget. *Circulaire*, 6 mai, 1871.

The foresight of Bishop Bourget had early provided the necessary weapons of offence and defence. As early as 1854 he resolved to establish a French journal which should ostensibly be under the direction of laymen. Four years before he had cheered on the founders of the "True Witness," a journal "written by laymen, under the direction of priests." * Pius IX. has deigned, from time to time, to give his special protection and blessing to writers of this school. The *Bulletin Mensuel*, published at Montreal, with the avowed object of aiding the restoration of the temporal power, has been so encouraged. The *Courrier du Canada*, once the organ of an archbishop accused of strong Gallican tendencies, received, after it became an extreme ultramontane advocate, the blessing of Pius IX., which is to descend to the progeny of the publisher to the third generation. So great is the horror of this journal of the terms "Catholic Liberal" and "Liberal Catholic," that it has come to reject with equal disdain the qualifying word in the party designation, "Liberal Conservative."

But it must not be supposed that the liberty of these writers is very ample. They are forbidden, by a decree of the fifth Council of Quebec, to bring under discussion establishments of which the bishops are assumed to be the natural protectors and judges. To this decree the united hierarchy has added a prohibition to discuss the conduct of bishops and priests. If any one has a complaint to make against an archbishop, he must lay it before the Pope.†

Practically Gallicans and Liberal Catholics have been treated as fair game. This section of the Church of Rome in Canada has been the object of the rancorous and envenomed hatred of the Jesuits and the Ultramontanes.

In 1871 a *Programme Catholique*, based on a pastoral letter of the Bishop of Three Rivers, was issued, requiring candidates to pledge themselves to alter the laws relating to education, marriage, and the canonic erection of parishes, in the way the bishops should direct. A year later the Jesuit priest Braün, in a sermon preached on the occasion of the celebration of the golden wedding of the priesthood of the Bishop of Montreal, made a violent attack on the Gallican party in the Canadian Church,

* Circulaire, 11 mai, 1850.

† Lettre Pastorale des Evêques de la Province Ecclésiastique de Quebec, 22 septembre, 1875.

and asserted the absolute supremacy of the church over the state. The Bishop of Montreal, acting on orders from Rome, divided the parish of Montreal, contrary to the dispositions of the civil law; and the Legislature of Quebec was afterwards brought to enact that decrees amended by the Pope are binding in that province. When an attempt to put into force the decrees of the Congregation of the Index and the Inquisition failed only because the right to refuse, by way of penalty, burial in consecrated ground did not exist, the bishops secured the passage of an act by the Legislature of Quebec, which authorized each bishop to say in what part of the cemetery, the consecrated or the unconsecrated, any one shall be buried.

Bishop Bourget, the great patron of the New School, struck the keynote to which its members were to respond. "No one," he said, "is permitted to be free in his religious and political opinions; it is for the church to teach her children to be good citizens as well as good Christians, by instilling into them the true principles of faith and morals, of which she alone is the sole depositary. . . . Her divine mission is to teach sovereigns to govern with wisdom and subjects to obey with joy.*

One of the writers of the New School, Alphonse Villeneuve, a priest, declared his readiness to curse his own work † if the Pope should condemn it. Addressing Pius IX. in a printed letter, June 13, 1872, as "the infallible pontiff, the supreme king of Christian kings," he says: "You are the judge of consciences, the doctor of faith; yours are the words of eternal life; judge you my book. If you condemn it, I also will curse it." Another priest, Alexis Pelletier, a prolific pamphleteer, who wrote under the *nom de guerre* of "Luigi," had the temerity to differ in opinion from the Archbishop of Quebec on a question of education. Orders came from Rome (1876) that he was to write no more on the forbidden subject. The offending writer at once gave in his unqualified submission, and ceased to write, not only on this, but on every other subject. When Pelletier exalted the authority of the church over that of the state, he was on safe ground, but when he ventured to differ in opinion from an archbishop, he was undone.

Abbé Pâquet, a professor in the University of Laval, Quebec, bids the students "listen to the voice of faith manifested by the

* Lettre Pastorale, 31 mai, 1858.

† La Comédie Infernale.

mouth of the sovereign pontiffs, the infallible organs of revealed truth." * To this teaching in a Roman Catholic University, if the lecturer stopped here, we should have little to say ; but it is different when the Abbé Pâquet tells us that "man has neither the right nor the liberty to refuse to believe, or to choose between the different religions," and that a government representing the collective will of the nation no more possesses this right than an individual ; that "religious toleration is a gross error, a blasphemy, and an impiety" ; that "everywhere and at all times the principle of religious or dogmatic intolerance will remain master of the position, because it is the truth, and truth is indestructible and eternal" ; that "those who reproach the church with being intolerant of toleration reproach her with nothing less than her right of existence" ; that, "as the church cannot renounce her mission without renouncing her existence, she ought always to anathematize this teaching" of toleration. The abbé does indeed allow that the civil laws may in certain cases "tolerate what God and the church reprove," but to give it "the right of action never." A government, he tells the students of Laval, and afterwards, by publishing his lectures, the general public, cannot proclaim civil liberty of worship without usurping a right which does not belong to it.

In perfect accord with this are the writings of Father Braün, a Jesuit priest of Montreal. "It is customary," he says, "to regard Protestantism as a religion which has its rights. This is an error. Protestantism is not a religion ; Protestantism has not a single right. It possesses the force of seduction. It is a rebellion in triumph ; it is an error which flatters human nature. Error can have no rights ; rebellion can have no rights. Neither error nor rebellion can dispense with the obligation to perform a duty. Rebellion has a strict duty to fulfil ; this duty is to repent, to come back, submission to the church." † The tenure by which Canadian Protestants hold the liberties which these writers tell them they have no right to enjoy is whatever voting majority they have over the willing recipients of these intolerant pretensions.

These are not isolated or accidental expressions. "When truth is evident," says Father Lory, "either by means of a certain demonstration or on the testimony of an infallible authority," the con-

* *La Libéralisme.*

† *Instructions dogmatiques sur le mariage chrétien, 1873.*

science is at liberty (such is the phraseology) to embrace it; but "error has no right to manifest itself."* The crime of reprinting a speech of Castelar on religious liberty brought down on *Le Réveil*, then published in Quebec, an interdict from the archbishop.† The interdict, as usual, meant death, which a change of the place of publication to Montreal could not and did not avert. The *Annuaire* of the Institut-Canadien of Montreal for 1868 was condemned at Rome, at the instigation of Bishop Bourget, because it contained a report of a lecture in favor of toleration; and the bishop sent a warning from Rome, where he then happened to be, that any one who should persist in keeping the book in his possession would be denied the sacraments even in the article of death. Such is the spirit of the New School of Ultramontanes in Canada to-day; and the practice of its adepts, as this case shows, is in full accord with its theories.

In attempting to enforce in Canada the decrees of the Congregation of the Index and the Inquisition, in the Guibord case, the Ultramontanes claimed jurisdiction over the consciences of Protestants.‡ Vicar-General Truteau, when under examination in the course of that trial, said: "The church regards as those over whom she can exercise jurisdiction all persons who have been baptized. There are therefore only non-baptized persons belonging to the Institut-Canadien who are not subject to the authority of the church; all others are subject to that authority, whether they be Catholics or Protestants. And on this principle I consider the entire body of the Institute was bound to conform to the exigencies of the church." The church had cast these children from her bosom, but still she claimed jurisdiction over them. This claim of extended jurisdiction means nothing less than that every Protestant who has been baptized may be denied the liberty of reading any book which has been put in the *Index*. In Protestant countries the difficulty would be to enforce ecclesiastical penalties for a disregard of this prohibition, but in Roman Catholic countries means of inflicting punishment would be found.

Some very serious practical results would follow application of

* Union Catholique, Montréal, Séance du 28 mai, 1876.

† Circulaire, 31 août, 1876.

‡ In his judgment in the Guibord case Judge Mondelet said: "On reclame juridiction même sur les consciences des Protestants."

this principle to the marriage relation. It would compel thousands of husbands to separate from their wives, and of wives from their husbands, while it would put the stigma of illegitimacy on the offspring. Civil marriage, the Jesuit Braün contends, is concubinage, the contract null, and the two parties, to whom the church refuses the sacraments, are bound to separate. It may not be comforting for some legislators to know that "all parliaments which authorize civil marriage are laboring for the damnation of souls." Should civil marriage be authorized in Canada, Father Braün warns us, we should see "pretended wives obliged to separate from their pretended husbands on the bed of death; to celebrate their marriage in the last agony, or to die without receiving the sacraments and"—the Jesuit here gets facetious—"be legally damned." It may not be new to be told that it is "the sovereign pontiff who declares what is the law of marriage, not only among the faithful, but also among heretics and infidels," and that "he gives his decisions independent of local laws and temporal princes,"* but it is strange that such pretences should be emphasized in the present day. If these pretensions were allowed and practically carried into effect, the reasons for annulling marriages, always on the theory that they were no marriages, would be so numerous that the existence of the family in North America would be seriously menaced.

Bishop Bourget surrounded himself with a mock Congregation of the Index, which was, nevertheless, a very real thing. One of the duties of the ten priests attached to the episcopal palace was to examine new books for the purpose of ascertaining whether they contained anything which baptized persons, Catholic and Protestant, should not be allowed to read. But these twenty eyes seemed sometimes to be struck with blindness. When the priest Villeneuve wrote a comedy in which he brought the first ecclesiastical dignitaries in the land to the palace of Pandemonium, in hell, and represented them as inspired by demons, the clerical censors were blind and dumb,—they saw nothing and heard nothing of this dismal comedy. Bishop Bourget, in whose interest the scandalous comedy was being played, saw nothing, heard nothing, uttered no single word of censure. But when a layman criticised the work of the clerical comedian unfavorably, the fact

* Braün, *Mariage chrétien*.

at once came to the knowledge of the bishop; and so prompt was he to discharge his duty, that he issued, without delay, a circular forbidding any person "to keep, for any purpose whatever, except to refute," this pamphlet, unless with his special permission. Any one who might persist in keeping it, after publication of this notice, would fall into the category of reserved cases, and be incapable of being absolved for so great a sin by any authority less than that of the bishop or his vicars-general. In this impartial spirit did the bishop and his ten literary censors perform their duties. And there were some reasons for believing that their knowledge of their duties was equal to their impartiality. The vicar-general admitted on oath, in the Guibord trial, that he had never seen a copy of the *Index*, and did not know whether that treasure was to be found in the episcopal palace. Is it likely that the inferior clergy who acted as literary censors were better instructed in their duties than the vicar-general? However this may be, this duty of literary censorship was performed with a degree of energy which was almost superhuman.

Le Pays, a liberal journal published at Montreal, fell under the condemnation of Bishop Bourget; and though it lingered for some time it never recovered from the effects of the blow. *L'Événement*, conducted by Senator Fâbre, was obliged by the archbishop to retract the statement that "it is always dangerous to introduce religious principles into political contests"; and more recently it received a warning from the same quarter for publishing an analysis of a sermon which the tribunals have since found to be tainted with undue clerical influence. Not long since the *Gazette de Sorel* was denounced from the altar, — the priest forbidding his parishioners to read or to receive it. In 1860 the Holy Office condemned the *Courrier de St. Hyacinthe*, which has since fallen into line, and is permitted to live on the condition of absolute submission to Rome. When the *Journal de Québec* had the temerity to contend, in a mild sort of way, that "the citizens have the right, and are at liberty to express their opinions on political subjects, without having their rights interfered with by the ecclesiastical authorities," the vicar-general thought it a sufficient answer to point to the Encyclical of December 8, 1864.

The right of priests to use the confessional to discover whether a penitent reads a forbidden journal is defended by the *Courrier*

du Canada, — an oracle to which the papal benediction has been given to the third generation. This argument was, in 1875, used against the *Bien Public*, which the priests had forbidden their flocks to read. This journal was moderate in tone, professing neither "Catholic liberalism" nor the doctrines of the "Liberal Catholics" of Europe. Nevertheless it succumbed before the hostility of the curés. The *Réveil* republished a speech of Castelar, in which the Spanish statesman defended the principle of toleration. For this offence the archbishop instructed the priests to discover whether the dangerous journal was read in their parishes, and, if so, to interdict the parishioners from reading it in future. It had been the aim of this journal to avoid the discussion of questions that would be distasteful to the clergy; but it was told that a journal which avoided religious discussion was necessarily atheistical, and therefore unfit to live. When the authority of the bishops is thought to require reinforcement, the Congregation of the Propaganda, at Rome, issues a mandate forbidding the faithful to read a particular journal. This is looked upon as a direction from the Holy See, which no one is at liberty to disobey.

Within two years the Roman Catholic episcopate of Quebec has agreed to attempt to control elections to the House of Commons at Ottawa, and to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec. As late as 1867 the Bishop of Montreal admitted that it was the duty of the clergy to be neutral in all questions which did not involve religious principles. Then he desired the clergy to note well the difference between this direction, "Vote or do not vote for a particular candidate," and this other direction, "Vote for him who in your soul and conscience you believe to be qualified to sustain the interests of religion and of the country."* The Bishop of Rimouski went much farther in the direction of safety. He interdicted the priests of his diocese from directing the faithful to vote for one candidate rather than another, from designating or naming the candidates *en chaire*, or pronouncing on their respective merits. The late Archbishop of Quebec is reported to have verbally answered an inquiry by saying, "You ought to vote according to your own conscience and not that of another."

* Mandement, 18 avril, 1867.

In 1871 the bishops had not agreed upon any common plan for the control of the elections. The Bishop of Three Rivers reminded the faithful, in a pastoral letter, that the legislators to be elected were charged with the protection and defence of their religious interests, and it was for the electors to see that they were qualified in this as well as in other respects to discharge their duty. It was necessary to conserve that liberty which gave the clergy the immense advantage of being able to govern the Church of Canada according to the directions of the Holy See and the Church of Rome.

On this pastoral was founded the *Programme Catholique*, to which candidates were, in many cases, required to subscribe. In this document the separation of church and state, which the preamble of an act of the Canadian Legislature secularizing the Protestant clergy reserves had, several years before, declared to be necessary, was denounced as an absurd and impious doctrine. The necessity of all who were in a position to exercise legislative power being in perfect accord with the church was insisted on. No one regarding whom there was any doubt in this respect ought to be elected. The full and complete adhesion to Roman Catholic doctrines, in religion, politics, and social economy, was the first and principal qualification to be required in a candidate by Catholic electors. The laws relating to marriage, education, and the erection of parishes, were described as being in conflict with the claims of the church; and it was the duty of Catholic legislators to amend them in accordance with the demands of the bishops, "with a view of placing them in harmony with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church." The electors should make it a condition that they would vote for no candidate who would not enter into a stipulation to "conform entirely to the teachings of the church in these matters." Many candidates of both parties subscribed to this programme.

The joint letter of the eight bishops, dated September 22, 1875, claims for the clergy nothing less than the absolute direction of political elections. In this letter the ground is taken that there are questions in which the clergy may and ought to interfere, in the name of religion. This right and this duty are practically allowed no limit, when examples are given for illustration. "A political party," the bishops say, "ought to be judged dangerous,

not only by its programme and its antecedents, but also by the programmes and antecedents of its leaders, of its principal members, and its press, if the party does not disavow and separate definitively from them in case they persist in their error after having been made aware of it." In all such cases the priests are instructed to "declare with authority that to vote in a particular way (*en tel sens*) is a sin, and that to do a particular act exposes its authors to the censures of the church." It is also assumed that the church is independent of civil society and superior to it; that "the state is in the church and not the church in the state." The priests, who are assumed to belong to a society superior to civil society, are also empowered to give supreme directions to the constituted authorities.

Should any one deny the right of the priest to interfere in elections with spiritual censures, Bishop Bourget says, on his own account, he ought not to be elected. Nor are the electors to regard as eligible any candidate "who desires the separation of church and state; who sustains propositions condemned by the Syllabus; who rejects the intervention of the Pope, the bishops, and the priests, in the affairs of government"; who "criticises and censures the mandates and circulars of bishops and the instructions of pastors on the subject of elections"; who "favors journals, books, and societies which the church condemns."

Bishop Rogers, of New Brunswick, goes as far as any of the Quebec bishops. He lays it down that the law of God, which is to be the rule in politics as in everything else, is to be interpreted for Roman Catholics by their legitimate pastors, especially the Pope, the first pastor, the authorized interpreter of the law of God not only in matters of faith but also of morals, which comprehend every human act. Even Archbishop Lynch, of Toronto, who has aimed to play a liberal rôle, defines politics to be morals on a large scale; and we know that the church claims absolute direction in all matters of morals.

The Bishop of Rimouski, in his own person, illustrates in a remarkable way the progress which ultramontanism has made within a short time. From interdicting his priests the right to name candidates in the pulpit or to speak in favor of their respective merits, he has gone to the opposite extreme. In 1875 he claimed the right of the priests to interfere in elections with the

terrors of spiritual censures, and denied the right of the civil authority to put any limits to the ecclesiastical power. He warned the faithful not to vote for any one who sustains principles which the church has condemned; and the admonition is supported by an assertion of Divine power, which would certainly have been rejected at the Council of Trent,—“I am judge and doctor, divinely appointed.”

The priests obeyed these episcopal mandates with alacrity. An appeal was made to Rome, but by whom is a matter of conjecture, not of certainty, to put a stop to this extraordinary exertion of clerical influence. Cardinal A. Franchi, Préfet of the Congregation of the Propaganda, wrote to the archbishop for precise information on the subject. The archbishop, apparently becoming discomposed, soon after issued a pastoral in direct opposition to the instructions of the joint letter of the whole episcopate. He forbade the priests to discuss political questions in the church, or at the church doors; directed them to volunteer no advice on the subject of elections under any circumstances, and not even to answer questions which might be put to them while on pastoral visits or in attendance on the sick.

“Does this new pastoral,” people puzzlingly asked, “supersede the joint letter?” The archbishop at once volunteered a negative reply. He tried, in vain, to disprove an absence of harmony between the two documents; and did not improve matters by saying that the joint letter was addressed “to all the Catholics of Quebec,” while the subsequent pastoral was merely intended “to enlighten the electors on certain duties which they have to perform, and to put them on their guard against certain disorders.”

The joint letter was thrice approved at Rome, first by Dr. de Angelis, Doctor of Canon Law, next by Cardinal Franchi, Préfet of the Congregation of the Propaganda, and finally by the Pope himself. The appeal to Rome against the joint letter put the bishops on the defensive. Thither they sent a delegation, consisting of Mgr. Lafleche, of Three Rivers, and the Rev. M. Lamarche, to defend the position they had taken. The appellants to Rome, whoever they were, complained that the priests were interfering in elections with a degree of imprudence that “would compromise the future of religion in the country.” But they had sent no one to Rome to advocate their cause. Bishop Lafleche drew up

a long memorial, covering everything which had occurred relating to the matter in dispute for a period of twenty years. When the Préfet of the Propaganda had read this document, he consoled its author with the assurance that the teachings therein exposed "were perfectly conformable to those of the Holy See, of which they were the faithful and often the textual echo; that the rules of conduct prescribed for the clergy, as to the way in which they should instruct the faithful in the fulfilment of their spiritual duties, were very wise, and that both had received the approbation of the Holy See in the decrees of the provincial councils of Quebec"; which decrees cannot take effect till they are sanctioned at Rome. This functionary also assured Mgr. Lafleche that the doctrine contained in the joint letter is "perfectly sound and conformable to the teachings of the Holy See."

A statement of the case was laid before Pius IX. by Cardinal Franchi. The result was that the Bishop of Three Rivers had the felicity of bringing back with him to Canada a brief of the Pope, dated December 18, 1876, which gives a complete victory to the Ultramontanes. "We rejoice chiefly," says Pius IX., "at the care you take to inculcate among the Canadian people sound doctrine, and to explain to them what regards the nature, the constitution, and the rights of the church." The bishops were praised for having raised a warning voice against the errors of Liberalism called Catholic. The Bishop of Rimouski, in communicating this brief to the clergy of his diocese, rejoices that "the supreme head of the church formally approves the teachings contained in our letter upon the constitution and rights of the church."

One of the first priests who was required to read the joint letter at the altar, M. Lussier, the curé of Bourcherville, would have avoided the task if he could. But he soon found that there was no escape from an unpleasant duty. Dr. Fortier, one of the candidates, had declared himself a Rouge and a Moderate Liberal. When this fact came to the knowledge of the Bishop of Montreal, he wrote to this curé, and presumably to others, in these terms: "Our Holy Father the Pope, and after him the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province, have declared that Catholic Liberalism is a thing to be regarded with the abhorrence with which one contemplates a pestilence; no Catholic is allowed to proclaim himself a Moderate Liberal, consequently this Moderate Liberal cannot be elected rep-

representative by Catholics." The curé read the bishop's pastoral to his parishioners, and then went to Montreal to ask further instructions from his diocesan. When he asked if he had anything more to do, the bishop replied promptly: "You are to read the letter of the bishops." "But," remonstrated the priest, mildly, "permit me to say I fear to excite the murmurs of some of the parishioners." The bishop was inexorable. "We must not," he said, "fear to speak the truth; in desiring to be prudent, we compromise ourselves." The joint letter was read as ordered. The curé, M. Lussier, now up to his work, explained to the congregation how the church deals with error: that she instructs, enlightens, and exhorts the faithful; and if they remain obdurate, "she launches her thunders against them, and declares them excluded from her bosom." Such is the penalty of not voting as she directs. M. Lussier resided at Rome many years, and enjoys the distinction, not often conferred, of Doctor of Canon Law. He is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Vatican; and his hesitation in reading the joint letter was purely prudential.

The reading of the joint letter raised loud murmurs of indignation. Many persons in the congregation designated it a mendacious document. This statement the priest stigmatizes as blasphemous. "If," he says, "the bishops, speaking with the Pope, teaching with the Pope, deceive themselves and say what is not true, it follows that the Holy Spirit deceives himself and is a liar; for it is he who has appointed the bishops to rule the Church of God." M. Lussier, when he had once got his peremptory instructions, did all the bishop could ask of him. Here is an extract from his sermon, approved by the Bishop of Montreal: "The candidate who spoke last Sunday called himself a Moderate Liberal. As Catholics you cannot vote for him; you cannot vote for a Liberal nor for a Moderate Liberal, for moderate is only another term for liar." "The church condemns Liberalism; you cannot remain Catholics and vote for a Liberal." In 1873 a political party in the Province of Quebec abandoned the name "Liberal," under this kind of pressure, and substituted "National Party" in its place. The qualifying term "Liberal Conservative" was not less obnoxious, and was repudiated by that section of the conservative press which belongs to the Ultramontane School.

Nearly at the same time the curés of Charlevoix County were

doing with a will the work which M. Lussier commenced with prudential reluctance. This election was contested, and finally set aside on account of the undue influence of the clergy. Six weeks were consumed in taking the evidence, and two hundred witnesses were examined. The priests formally adopted M. Langevin as their candidate, and he would not consent to stand till assured of their support. One priest told the electors that he, not they, was responsible for the use they made of the franchise. Another told them that to refuse to listen to the curé on the question of voting was disobedience to the Pope. Liberalism must be crushed. If the electors listened to false prophets, a terrible chastisement would fall on the country, such as the destruction of the harvest. Very artfully the duties of electors were put. They were to vote according to their consciences, and not merely so, but "according to their consciences enlightened by the mandate of the Bishops of Quebec." M. Langlais, curé of St. Hilarion, asked the electors on which side they would like to find themselves when they came face to face with death,—on the side of Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel, or on the side of the Pope. They must follow one flag or the other. To vote for a Liberal was to set out on the road to hell. At least one cure told his flock that to vote for a Liberal was a mortal sin. As a proof of the effect of these religious terrors, one witness said: "My religious belief as a Catholic is, that those who act in opposition to religion and their pastors go to hell when they die." As the congregation wended its way from church, it was a common remark that whoever voted for the Rouge would infallibly be damned. "I was afraid," said another witness, "if I voted for M. Tremblay, I should be damned." To follow the party which had false prophets, one priest told his trembling congregation, would lead to the scaffold. The curé of St. Iréné told his flock that it was obligatory on them to follow his advice. In case of civil commotion, another priest predicted, the Liberals would be the first to strangle the priests. To vote for M. Tremblay would cause the overthrow of religion, and men would wade in the blood of bishops and priests. Whoever voted for the Liberals engaged in the service of hell. When the women believed their husbands would endanger their salvation by voting in a particular way, they used all their influence to bring them to the safe side.

Some of the priests, as will be readily understood from this evidence, in going so far beyond the line of prudence, failed to carry all their parishioners with them. A sermon preached at Baie St. Paul, one witness swore, "made so great a tumult that many persons left the church, and four fell to fighting after they had engaged in political discussion." At St. Hilarion several persons left the church while the curé was preaching. In an attested copy of a sermon which the curé of this parish sent to the bishop, in justification of himself, he admits having told the electors: "While I, preaching sound doctrine, am in communication with my bishop, you ought to listen to me and obey me. I am here your legitimate pastor, charged to enlighten, instruct, and council you; if you disregard my word, you disregard that of the bishop, that of the Pope, that of the Saviour, by whom they are sent."

When Judge Routhier, before whom the case was first tried, decided that all this license of the pulpit had in it none of the undue influence complained of, but was a necessary incident of the liberty of preaching, nobody who knew the ground which he had previously taken in a nearly analogous case was surprised. But at the same time no well-informed person believed that his judgment would stand. It was known from the first that the case would be carried to the Supreme Court. Judge Routhier took the ground that, voting being a moral act, the conduct of the voter comes under the canon law of Rome, and ousts the Legislature and the civil tribunals of their several jurisdictions. According to this doctrine, the priests were within their own domain, fulfilling their pastoral duties as the guardians of morality, and they did not encroach on the rights of the state, which has neither authority nor competence to deal with the matter. Should a priest refuse the sacraments to an elector for having voted contrary to the instructions of the priest, Judge Routhier would refer him to the bishop, whose orders he had followed in the whole procedure which forms the subject of complaint. This would be to make the bishop judge in his own case. Judge Routhier held that the law did not include clerical intimidation under the head of undue influence.

The Supreme Court was of a different opinion, when the case came before it on appeal. "On the principles of common law and on the construction of the statute, of which we entertain no doubt," said Mr. Justice Ritchie, "we cannot for a moment doubt that it is

our duty to declare that undue spiritual influence is prohibited by statute." The priest, like the layman, has the fullest liberty of discussion, solicitation, advice, persuasion; but whether in the pulpit or out of it, he has no right to threaten to restrain the liberty of a voter, to frighten him into voting or abstaining from voting otherwise than as his natural desire and free will prompt; he has no right to threaten to inflict any damage, spiritual or temporal, with the view of compelling the elector to vote one way or the other. The Court held that the priests had made themselves the agents of one of the candidates, M. Langevin. The political sermons, in the opinion of Mr. Justice Tachereau, by whom the judgment of the court was delivered, caused many electors to be seized with a dread of committing a grievous sin and being deprived of the sacraments. He thought these sermons must have influenced the decision of the majority of the ill-instructed voters, though they might have had no influence on the educated, to whom they were addressed. It was clear to him that a general system of intimidation had been practised, and as a consequence undue influence exercised. For this reason the election was declared void.

As there is no appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court, even to the Privy Council, this decision must be held to settle the law. But for the decision of a civil tribunal, in a case where the clergy are concerned, the episcopate has scant respect. "The church," say the bishops, acting in their collective capacity, "has its tribunals regularly constituted, and if any one believes he has a right to complain of a minister of the church, he ought not to cite him before a civil tribunal, but before an ecclesiastical tribunal, which alone is competent to judge the doctrine and acts of the priest."* They quote the authority of Pius IX. to show that the major excommunication is the penalty of disobeying this injunction. Some of the priests to whom the pastoral was addressed asked explanations; and another episcopal missive was issued, November 14, 1875, explaining that while the church maintains the principle of absolute immunity she tolerates under particular circumstances what she cannot prevent. When a priest is accused of having exercised undue influence in an election, the bishops instruct him to deny the competence of the civil tribunal to sit in

* Lettre Pastorale des Evêques de la Province Ecclésiastique de Québec, septembre 22, 1875.

judgment on the case, and to insist on recourse being had to an ecclesiastical tribunal. The only priest who appeared as a witness in the Charlevoix election first obtained the special authority of the archbishop for doing so.

Before the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Charlevoix election had been delivered, a similar decision had been given, three judges agreeing, by another court, in the Bonaventure election case. At that election intimidation was exercised by two priests; one asserting that "any elector voting for the Liberal candidate would be eternally lost, and his body be refused burial in consecrated ground." Both menaced the electors with the refusal of the sacraments, as the penalty of giving a forbidden vote. In connection with this menace the name of the diocesan was used. Besides annulling the election, the decision of the court disqualified M. Beauchemin, the successful candidate, because, in the words of the judgment, "these fraudulent manœuvres [of the curés] were practised with his knowledge and consent." The pith of this judgment is that the menace of spiritual penalties constitutes undue influence.

The use of the name of the Bishop of Rimouski by the offending priests, Thivièrge and Gagne, was probably not unauthorized. Certain it is that in a mandement, January 15, 1877, this bishop denounced the judgment of Mr. Justice Casault in no measured terms. He insisted that Catholic judges cannot in conscience administer such laws as that which controls the parliamentary elections of Quebec. Their oath of office does not bind the conscience. That the judgment is inadmissible he undertakes to prove by the fact that it is in unison with several propositions condemned by the Syllabus. He defends the menaces uttered by the curés to refuse the sacraments for political reasons. He claims for the church the exclusive right to say what limits the priest is to observe under pretext of preaching. Nothing, he contends, can be undue which a priest does by command of his superior. In the priest he recognizes only the dispenser, not the master, of the sacraments; and when the church tells him to refuse to administer them, the duty of the curé is obedience. The bishop who uses this language is the same who, a few years ago, forbade his priests to take any part in political contests.

When this mandement was issued, the Charlevoix election case

was before the Supreme Court, on appeal ; but if the object was to intimidate that tribunal, it was not attained. Still, Mr. Justice Tachereau admitted that this censorious mandement placed himself, and such of his colleagues as are Catholics, in a position of difficulty. If a single bishop has already embarrassed the highest court in the country, the united episcopate will no doubt hope to achieve a more signal triumph in future.

Hints have been thrown out that the Ablegate Bishop Conroy, now in Canada, is to counsel the bishops to act with greater prudence. But no official document looking in that direction has been published. The joint letter of the bishops, which formed the instructions on which the offending priests acted, has, as we have seen, received the special sanction of Pius IX. ; and we know that his judgment has been pronounced irreformable.

The issue between the ecclesiastical and the civil powers has developed into an open rupture. On the one side are the bishops, supported by Pope Pius IX., claiming the right to direct the clergy to use spiritual censures to compel electors to vote against their own wishes ; on the other side is the civil law, interpreted by a court from which there is no appeal, by which elections carried by such undue influence are null and void. The zealot who, during a summer excursion of 1877, on a Canadian river steamboat, pulled down the national flag and ran up the flag of the Pontifical Zouaves in its place, only acted out the theory which the Ultramontanes assert everywhere and on all occasions.

CHARLES LINDSEY.

P. S. The bishops of the Province of Quebec, at the instigation of Mgr. Conroy, apostolic delegate, have issued a new joint letter, which was read in the church, October 21, in which they disclaim having intended, in their pastoral of September 22, 1875, to invade the domain of political parties. They say their object was to state "the true doctrine concerning the constitution and rights of the church." That pastoral, even as now explained, still claims that the church is superior to the state ; and if that part of it which relates to Liberalism has been misunderstood in the past by the clergy, is it not probable that it will be misunderstood in the future by the *habitans*, only one fourth of whom can either read or write ?

C. L.